

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated November 16, 2007, pending claims 1-20 stand rejected. Claim 15 is objected to as lacking antecedent basis for “said guide channel”. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,807,477 to Tusso (“Tusso”). Claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0034631 to Lindenman et al. (“Lindenman”). In addition, claims 9-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lindenman in view of Tusso; claims 14, 15, and 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lindenman in view of Tusso and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,428,336 to Thurman (“Thurman”); and claims 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lindenman in view of Thurman.

Applicants Have Overcome the Objection to Claim 15 for Lack of Antecedent Basis

Applicants amended claim 15 to overcome the objection for lack of antecedent basis. Specifically, the Patent Office alleges that “said guide channel” lacked antecedent basis. Applicants amended claim 15 to overcome the objection. Support for the claim amendment to claim 15 is provided in paragraph 24 of the application.

Tusso Fails To Anticipate Claims 1-3

The Patent Office rejects claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Tusso. Although Applicants disagree with the rejection of claims 1-3 in view of Tusso, Applicants amend claim 1 to further prosecution and clarify the present invention.

Claim 1 requires a locking cam having a finger cammingly engaging a first detent in the camming surface of the locking arm to position the locking arm in a locked position. In addition,

claim 1 requires the finger movable to a second detent on the camming surface to move the locking arm in the unlocked position.

Tuso fails to disclose a finger engaging any detent in the locking arm as required by claim 1. Tuso merely teaches a cam member 128 having cam surfaces 130, 132. The cam surfaces 130, 132 are not fingers as set forth in claim 1. Moreover, even if the Patent Office alleges 130, 132 are fingers, cam surfaces 130, 132 fail to engage a detent in the locking arm. The hook portions 114 engage the keepers 124.

Moreover, even if the Patent Office alleges that the hook portions 112, 114 are detents and the cam surfaces 130, 132 constitute fingers, Tuso still fails to anticipate the present invention. Claim 1 requires that the finger cammingly engage a first detent on the locking arm to position the locking arm in a locked position. Instead, Tuso requires that the hook portion 114 engage the keeper 124. It is illogical that the cam surface 130, 132 would engage the hook portion 114 when the hook portion 114 is moving toward the camming surface 130, 132 at the locked position. Therefore, even in the broadest interpretation of claim 1, Tuso fails to anticipate claim 1.

As claims 2 and 3 depend directly from claim 1 and add additional limitations thereto, these claims are also believed allowable for the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Patent Office indicate claims 1-3 as allowable.

Lindenman Fails To Anticipate Claims 5-8

The Patent Office rejects claims 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Lindenman. Although Applicants disagree with the rejection of claims 5-8 in view of Lindenman, Applicants amend claim 1 to further prosecution and clarify the present invention.

Claim 5 requires that the locking assembly have a single head portion engaging the first aperture at the maneuvering position and the second aperture at the towing position.

Lindemen requires use of a control handle 76 having a first bar 78 and a second bar 80. As set forth in paragraph 32 of Lindeman, the first bar 78 will only align with the first aperture 86, and the second bar 80 will only align with the second aperture 88. Therefore, Lindeman fails to anticipate claim 5.

As claims 6-8 depend directly or indirectly from claim 5 and add additional limitations thereto, Applicants submit that claims 5-8 are allowable. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Claims 9-13 Are Not Obvious Over Lindenman in view Tusó

Claims 9-13 depend indirectly from claim 5 and add additional limitations thereto. Neither Lindenman nor Tusó, taken singly or in combination, teach or suggest a locking assembly having a single head portion engaging the first aperture at the maneuvering position and the second aperture at the towing position as required by claim 5.

As set forth above Lindenman teaches two different locking arms, each locking arm sized to only engage one aperture. Tusó teaches two distinct hook portions 114 for locking the head assembly.

It should be noted that Tusó also fails to meet other limitations required by claim 5. For example, claim 5 requires the head assembly movable along a guide rail having first and second apertures that engage the locking assembly. The head assembly of Tusó is movable along the rails 36 that do not have any apertures. Instead, the keepers 126 are located on two different rails that are perpendicular to the rails 36.

Therefore, Applicants believe that the rejection of claims 9-13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should be withdrawn. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Rejections of Claims 14, 15 and 17-20

As claims 14 and 15 depend indirectly from claim 5 and add additional limitations thereto, these claims are believed allowable for the reasons set forth above.

Applicants cancelled claims 17-20, Applicants submit that the rejections of claims 17-20 are moot.

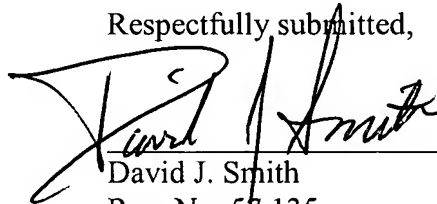
Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants submit that claims 1-15 are allowable over the references of record. In addition, newly added claims 21-25 are also believed allowable over the references of record. Should the Examiner have any questions pertaining to this response, undersigned Counsel would welcome a phone call to provide any further clarification.

Date: _____

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Respectfully submitted,



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